

What is claimed is :

1. Edible composition comprising at least 25% by weight (based on the dry weight of the total composition) of a pectin, particularly a pectin which gelatinizes by ionotropic gel formation, and at least 0.2% by weight (based on the dry weight of the total composition) of a carotenoid and/or another active ingredient.
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2. Composition according to claim 1, comprising at least 50% by weight (based on the dry weight of the total composition) of pectin.
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3. Composition according to claim 1-2, wherein the pectin has a degree of esterification (DE) below 50%.
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4. Composition according to claim 1-3, wherein the pectin has a degree of esterification (DE) between 30 and 45% and comprises between 60 and 75% of galacturonic acid units.
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5. Composition according to claim 1-4 in the form of a dry powder.
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6. Composition according to claim 1-5, comprising at least 1% by weight (based on the dry weight of the total composition) of a carotenoid.
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7. Composition according to claim 1-6, wherein the carotenoid is selected from lycopene, α -carotene, β -carotene, astaxanthin, canthaxanthin, zeaxanthin, lutein, and mixtures thereof, respectively.
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8. Composition according to claim 1-7, further comprising 0.01-5% by weight (based on the dry weight of the total composition) of an antioxidant.
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9. Composition according to claim 8, wherein the antioxidant is α -tocopherol.
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10. Composition according to claim 1-9, wherein the carotenoid is dispersed in oil at a ratio (by weight) of carotenoid:oil between 1:500 and 1:2.
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11. Composition according to claim 1-9, wherein the carotenoid is completely or partly dissolved in oil at ratio (by weight) of carotenoid:oil between 1:1000 and 1:5.
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12. Composition according to claims 1-11, wherein the carotenoid is encapsulated by the pectin.
13. Food comprising a composition according to claim 12.
- 5 14. Food according to claim 13, which is a fruit juice or vegetable juice, sauce/puree, (dietetic) fruit or vegetable drink or (sports) drink.
- 10 15. Process for the preparation of a composition comprising a carotenoid and/or another active ingredient, which process includes the following steps :
 - a) prepare an aqueous suspension comprising a pectin, particularly a pectin which gelatinizes by ionotropic gel formation,
 - b) add a composition comprising at least 0.5% by weight (based on the dry weight of the final composition) of a carotenoid or mixture of carotenoids, and/or other active ingredient(s) and, optionally, an oil to the suspension as prepared in step a) ,
 - c) emulsify the mixture,
 - d) spray the emulsion as prepared in step c) into a bath of an aqueous solution of a calcium salt,
 - e) separate the formed microparticles from the bath and, optionally, wash the microparticles, and
 - 20 f) optionally dry the microparticles obtained in step e).
16. A process according to claim 15, wherein the pectin used has a degree of esterification (DE) below 50%.